WIDE AWAKE PAGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

Edited by MARY MARSHALL.

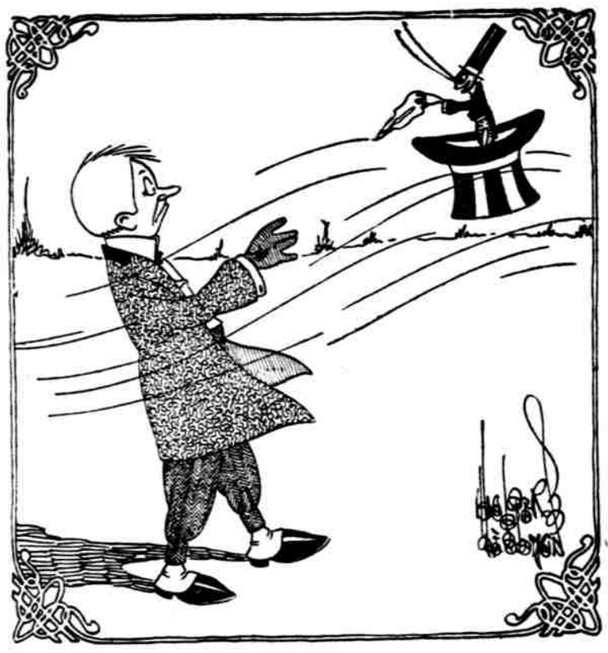
WILLIE BUGG'S RIDE.

The day was very windy.
And the wind was very strong.
And Georgie Alexander Smith
Was sauntering along.

When all at once a gust of wind
Took Georgie unaware,
And blew his hat right off his head.
And nearly took his hair.

Now Willie Bugg was sitting
On the hat to get a ride.
And when the hat blew off, you see,
He quickly got inside.

"Ta-ta," said Willie, "never mind,
Your hat is going my way,
And so I guess I'll take a ride--
I hope we'll meet some day."



The Boy Who Was a Born Sailor

By MARY MARSHALL.

When the little boy in this story found out, when he was twelve years old, that he could never go to school again because his father was too poor to send him, he made up his mind to keep the few books he had in school and teach himself by candlelight at night when it was too late to be outdoors.

You aren't supposed to kno . till the end of the story who this boy was, but his name was John and there are always so many boys named John that ' am sure you are none the wiser. John lived in a little seaside cottage in Scotland 150 years ago. His father was a poor man who earned his meager living tending the garden of a rich man and helping his poor neighbors, who earned their living catching fish in the great ocean.

"It may be just as well we didn't send John to school any longer," said oh's mother to his father one day when John was off with his playmates at the seashore. "He loves the sea like a born sailor, does that boy."

"Yes," said the father, "we couldn't have got much school learning into a boy like that, and maybe, wife," he said smiling hopefully, "maybe if we scrape and scrimp there might be enough money when we are gone for John to buy a fishing yawl of his own."

Meantime, if you had been walking along the seaside you would have seen a little band of boys lined up like soldiers on review, and at their head, shouting his orders against the incessant pounding of the ocean waves, you would have seen a hardy little, snub-nosed Scotch boy. That was John. They were playing sailor in the royal navy, and John, as usual, was the commander. John, somehow, knew just what orders to give and just what to do when they played this game; and he could lead his band of play sailors unscathed through the most violent naval battles and through the attack of the fiercest pirates that ever roamed the ocean.

John loved to play this game, but when he had no playmates to make into sailors he was just as happy to perch himself on a rock behind his father's cottage and watch the wonderful ocean. The deep water reached close to the shore here and the sailing vessels—from Aemrica and the West Indies—would sometimes come so close that he could see the sailors' faces on board very plainly. It was a dangerous coast for captains who did not know the rocks, and, as John sat perched on his high rock, he would shout directions to the captain of the boat he was watching, for, although he was only 12 years old, he knew every rock and reef on the rock-bound coast as other boys learn to know the trees and shrubs that grow around their houses. As John would sit there and shout directions, he could imagine that he was commanding all the boats that sailed by. Sometimes the captains would listen for this shrill, little voice and actually steer their vessels as he directed, knowing that the child knew better than they the treacheries of the coast.

But before many months had passed John had to go to work, and, being very strong and muscular for his age, he helped the fishermen in their boats, steering them and hauling lines for a shilling or so a week.

It was hard work, but what of that? To a boy like John, just to have the salt sea splashing in his face and to feel the little boat move over the waves as he wanted it to was enough to make up for all the jolts and thumps he got from it.

By the time John was 15 years old people in the small town all knew of John's skill at sailing, and the fishermen, as they gathered around the tavern fire on an evening for a friendly chat before they turned into their little cottages for the night, would agree that John had the making of "a right smart fisherman" in him.

One late afternoon on a gray summer day the fishermen in the tavern had more than usual to talk about. A Mr. Younger, a prosperous young shipowner, was in the town to look about for sailors to man a ship he was going to send out to the American colonies—then, as you know, in possession of the British.

"It would be a great chance to see the world," said one of the fishermen. "I wouldn't mind going myself if Mr. Younger would take me, but he seems to be very particular about his sailors. So far he hasn't found any one here he thinks would do for the voyage."

The fishermen's talk was interrupted suddenly. "Come, quick!" shouted the tavern keeper's boy from the door. "Old Andy is near beaten to pieces out there. A stiff northeast squall is up and he sure can't weather it."

In a flash all the men in the tavern ran down to the seashore, where, with a group of anxious fisher folk, they watched with bated breath the struggling little yawl about a quarter of a mile out at sea. Andy, to whom the yawl belonged, who was now in such danger, was well known for his recklessness in going out in the face of rising wind and it seemed now that he would have to pay dear for his lack of caution.

Among the spectators of this exciting scene was Mr. Younger, the young shipowner.

"What do you think, sir?" said one of the fishermen to the ship owner. "Can she possibly make the shore in a squall like this?"

Mr. Younger, with his eyes fixed on the tossing boat, shook his head. "No," he said slowly. "I have seen a good deal of clever work in sailing, but I never saw a sailor that could bring a boat through a wind like that."

Every one was in great excitement. Women were weeping and wringing their hands, and the men were watching with hands clenched in anxiety. But there was one man who seemed unconcerned. It was John's father.

Somehow the boat held her own and before many seconds more it was clear that she was making headway and was bearing straight for the little creek that formed a boat harbor for the little town. In a few minutes she was out of the clutches of the squall, and then, to Mr. Younger's surprise, he saw that the crew of the boat consisted of a small boy and a man—the man simply trimming the boat by sitting on what is known as the weather rail while the boy was steering the rudder, handling the sheets and telling the man what to do.

"I never saw such a feat of sailing in my life!" exclaimed Mr. Younger to the old man who stood smiling at his side.

"That is my boy, John, there, Mr. Younger," said the old man proudly. "I knew he would fetch her in all right. He has been through worse weather than this."

"I want to talk to that boy of yours," Mr. Younger said enthusiasticaly to the old man.

In a few minutes the boat had come up the little stream and the fishermen had either gone back to their work or had crowded around eager to question the man and boy who had just come through such danger.

"You are the best seaman I ever saw," said Mr. Younger, laying his hand on the boy's shoulder, not waiting for his father to introduce him. "I want to go to your cottage to talk to your father and you."

That night the rich shipowner went to the little cottage by the sea and sat down in the little living room and by the dim light of a single candle told his proposition to John's father.

"That boy of your's is a born sailor," he said.

"You don't mean you would be willing to take him as a sailor for the ship that is going out to America?" asked the father eagerly. You didn't think he would do, did you?"

"Why, my good man," said Mr. Younger, he is too good for that. I want to take him on as master's apprentice on the finest boat I own. It is just fitting out to sail for Virginia and the West Indies."

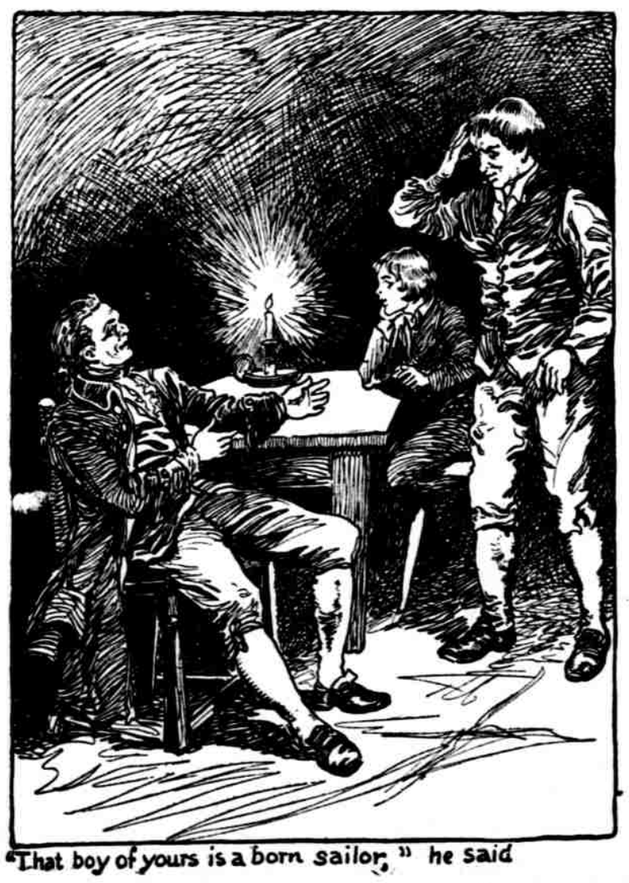
The old man's eyes filled with tears of mingled gratitude and sorow at the sudden realization that this would mean that the boy would have to go off and leave him.

"To think that John would have to leave us," he said, laying his hand on the boy's shoulder, but in another breath he added proudly: "But I am proud to think you want him. If he is willing himself, I shall not stand in the way of him."

The boy's eyes were brimful of joy and excitement. He had cherished in his heart, as all boys do, the dream that some day he could go off and see the great round world and do something that would make his father and mother proud of him. Perhaps, he thought to himself, perhaps he might some day rise to be captain of a boat.

Before Mr. Younger went that night it was agred that John should go with him, and John was the happiest boy and John's father was the happiest man that night in all Scotland. And who do you think this poor sailor boy turned out to be? A man at whose name every American boy's hat ought to come off. Can you guess?

Why, John Paul Jones, the founder of our navy, and one of the greatest sailors that ever lived.



"That boy of yours is a born sailor," he said

"Miss Fanny"

A Story of the British Army.

By EVERETT UPTON.

Curtis was the stupidest fellow in our regiment. At least so all we young officers thought. Walters had nicknamed him "Miss Fanny"—his baptismal name by ill-luck was Francis—and I fear we all in turn made use of the appellation.

A lot of us youngsters were collected on the quarter deck chaffing one another. Our regiment had been ordered out to assist in quelling a native rising in South Africa, and we were now on the voyage thither. Walters was the eldest of us by a few years, taller and bigger than the rest of the lieutenants.

During the entire voyage it was certainly patent to all that Walters never lost an opportunity of sneering either covertly or openly at poor Curtis.

I took upon myself the office of champion, and vowed I'd see fair play, but it did my protege more harm than good, for it invariably evoked from Walters a withering sarcasm upon fair-haired darlings tied to their brother officers' sword-tassels.

But the wearisome voyage came to an end at last, and one fine day we steamed into Table Bay and cast anchor outside Capetown. After a little delay we were ordered up the country, and proceeded on our march.

On the evening of the third day we reached our destination, and encamped not far from the Buffalo River on a wide plateau.

White, Curtis, and I shared one small tent. It was very close quarters, but we were getting used to roughing it.

We prepared to sup off such dainties as we could lay our hands upon. The feast consisted of some leathery beef, some tinned meats, and a jar of jam. We pounced on the viands, however, like hungry vultures.

Scarcely had we finished our repast when we became aware of an unwonted excitement in the camp. Some spies had brought word that the enemy was on their way to meet us and had taken up their positions at a kraal only twelve miles distant. The troops were ordered to lie down fully equipped, ready to turn out at a moment's notice. Then we were dismissed to our respective tents for the night, and the camp settled down again.

At reveille next morning the sentries reported all quiet, but it was soon known that the enemy was marching on toward us, and the general decided to move out and attack them in the open, leaving a sufficient force to garrison the camp. Our regiment was one of those ordered to the front. At midday we took up our position at a spot some nine miles distant from our own camp. The general rode down the lines issuing final instructions. The men responded with a hearty cheer. The enemy drew near in a compact black mass, brandishing their shields and assegais. The first shot was fired, and the battle began.

For the next half hour the booming of the cannon, the rattling of musketry, the flashing of firearms, the glitter of sabres, the whizzing of bullets, went on without intermission. But all the time we were steadily losing ground. Inch by inch the enemy was driving us back. On they came in vast overwhelming masses, a great, relentless horde, shouting their war cry and hurling their weapons with destructive aim.

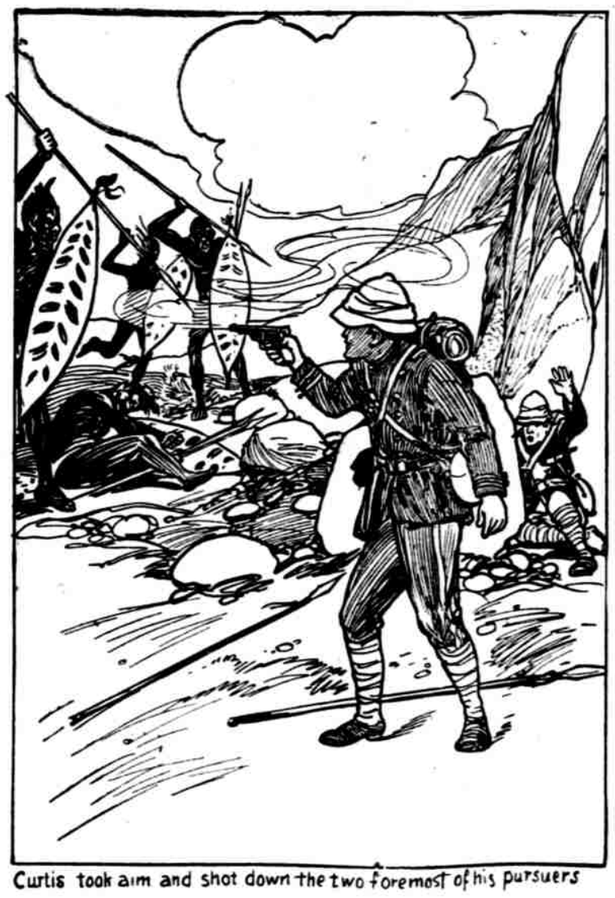
The general was forced at length to see that we had lost the day, and the bugles reluctantly sounded a retreat. But the retreat soon became a rout, and the ro- quickly resolved itself into a case of every one for himself. The uneven nature of the ground, seamed as it was with ravines and precipitous dongas, rendered it impossible for the officers to keep their men together. Discipline was at an end

And all the time the enemy were pursuing hard after us, and, with yells of triumph, were hurling their assegais with fatal precision. The air was dark with closely-pressed fugitives. Those who were mounted or could secure a horse had the best chance to safety, though it was small enough; but those who had only their own feet to trust to were in a dire case indeed, as I soon found to my bitter cost.

I had never been very fleet of foot, and I was quickly separated from my comrades. In descending a donga I received a wound in my sword arm. The sudden sharp pain caused me to miss my footing and sent me rolling to the bottom, where I lay sprawling in a shallow muddy stream.

At once I gave myself up for lost! Why I was not then and there dispatched I never knew. Possibly the enemy considered me dead already, and found it better sport to chase the knot of red-coated fugitives who were crossing the donga higher up.

I lay there some moments, faint with pain and loss of blood. Then the instinct of self-preservation and the love of life came back to me. Sitting up, I staunched the blood and bound up my arm as best I could. And then I climbed the other side of the donga and looked about me.



Curtis took aim and shot down the two foremost of his pursuers

There seemed a momentary lull in the pursuit. I loaded my revolver with my few remaining bullets and began cautiously threading my way through the tall yellow grass.

Goaded by the energy of despair, struggling with deadly faintness, I reached the foot of the hills, and sometimes on my feet, I scrambled upward among the brushwood and rugged boulders.

I had just reached the summit of the first ridge when I heard rapid steps behind me, and, glancing round, I saw a small lithe red-coated figure fleeing towards me with the swiftness of an arrow, his feet spurning the ground, and every nerve and muscle strained to the utmost. On his track, in hot pursuit, rushed three or four black swarthy forms, but the distance between pursuer and pursued did not seem to lessen. If anything the fugitive was the swifter.

Crouching down behind a boulder I watched, and as he drew nearer I recognized Curtis. He was darting past my hiding place when he caught sight of me, and panting out an astonished exclamation, "Marston! You here!" he came to a dead stop.

"For pity's sake, don't stop! Save yourself!" I gasped.

"And leave you to die? Never!"

The boulder only afforded the merest figment of protection. Concealment was impossible. At the back rose the scarped rock, in front more boulders, divided by a narrow path leading over the ridge. Planting himself in front of me, Curtis levelled his revolver.

The next moment four assegais flew through the air, just grazing our heads, and then rebounding from the hard rock dropped at our feet. Advancing a step forward, Curtis took aim and shot down the two foremost of his pursuers, and as the other two—men double his own size—came on with a spring, he fired twice and they fell.

But the deliverance was only temporary, as we knew. Again I implored Curtis to leave me and save himself, and again he flatly refused. So, with my shattered arm in a sling of his improvising, we set off again, he alternately dragging and helping me over the roughest bits of ground.

We had turned the crest of the hill and had advanced a few painful hundred yards, when Walters galloped madly past us, his horse all flecked with foam.

"Give Marston a lift, there's a good fellow. He's awfully chawed up!" Curtis shouted out.

"Impossible! Horse can't carry two. Sorry!" he called back.

But at last a joyful sight met our gaze, for beneath us, a mile or two off, were the gleaming tents of our own camp, and nearer still a handful of cavalry coming out in search of fugitives. I was vaguely wondering if my fast-failing powers could hold out till the now rapidly-advancing horsemen could reach us, when Curtis, a foot or two ahead of me, suddenly exclaimed, looking down into the ravine we had just left.

"Walters is surrounded! I must go to him. Our men will be up directly."

As he spoke he was moving off, and before he was out of sight I had lapsed into complete unconsciousness.

When I came to myself, I was lying in the hospital tent. My first inquiry was for Walters.

"Oh, nothing serious! An ugly wound or two; but he'll soon be all right again."

"And Curtis?"

He turned away, and brushed his coat-sleeve quickly across his eyes.

"Ah, poor fellow!" in a husky voice; then correcting himself, "poor fellow, indeed! Why, the lad was a hero! Saved Walters, and was stabbed to the heart himself. Upon my word, you youngsters didn't half know his worth!"

Of all who fell on that fatal day none had left behind him such a noble example of heroic self-sacrifice or had conferred more lasting honor on the regiment. And the tears shed by some of the bravest of our men were the laurel wreath we wove for him!

A Night of Terror

By WILLIAM BARTLESON.

One day when I was spending my vacation at Hilda's Colliery in Durham, England, the manager's son and I decided to spend the night down in the mine.

Tom and I changed our clothes in the lamp cabin, and I am sure we both cut a ludicrous figure in the ill-fitting garments, many sizes too big, that we donned for the occasion.

Like most colleries, The Hilda pit has two shafts, one named the upcast and the other the downcast.

In those days the ventilation of mines was not so perfect as at the present time. Instead of elaborate fans, a huge fire at the bottom of the shaft drew the vitiated air from the workings, and it ascended what was known as the "smoky" shaft.

The thousand feet descent occupied about four minutes, but to me it appeared hours, and I felt considerably relieved when the cage dropped with a bump on the cross buntings.

Our first visit was to the stable, where about eighty Shetlands and moor-bred ponies were stalled, busily engaged in munching their corn. At the head of each stall was a board, on which was painted the horse's name, and I came across an old friend in the shape of a pony named Punch, an iron gray stallion on whose back I had often cantered before he became a denizen of the subterranean depths. I am certain that Punch knew me, for when I spoke and patted his little neck he whinnied and rubbed his nose against my hand.

Leaving the stables, we made our way into the mine, where the night shift men were at work. The miners were busily engaged in blasting operations, and the loud reports that incessantly reverberated through the workings were enough to make the hair of any ordinary boy stand on end.

Just after midnight, when we were about three miles or so from the shaft mouth, Young observed: "There's something wrong, lads—I'm verra much afraid the pit has fired; can you no' smell it?"

For some few minutes I had experienced a peculiar smell, and noticed that the light of the Davy lamp which I carried seemed misty.

We made tracks for the shaft bottom. But the sense of burning became more intense, and we began to cough. There was no doubt about the smoke now, and, to add to our discomfiture, our lamps, with one exception, had gone out.

The atmosphere was stifling and hot and a miner named Hardy, a man of superior education, guessed the truth.

"The pithead is on fire," exclaimed Hardy, "and, if the pulleys go, we are all dead men."

The air was scorching hot, and the dense smoke filled our lungs until every one of us coughed violently.

Hardy again spoke. "Let each man get a car, and push it; keep your faces well down, and you'll cause a current of fresh air."

It took us about a couple of hours to reach the bottom of the shaft, when to our great relief we found the atmosphere much clearer, although still stifling hot. A queer swishing noise was heard in the shaft, as though a cataract of water was pouring down it.

Then came a terrible grating sound, and Young, in stentorian voice, called out, "Stand clear, men, here she comes." He had scarcely finished speaking when the debris of a cage followed by big timbers, crashed into the mine, smashing the stout oak buntings that ran across it as if they had been so much match wood.

The water began to rise above our feet until it reached our waists, and every one gave himself up for lost. The massive iron segments lined with brickwork forming the shell of the shaft had given way, and thousands of tons of water from disused workngs were now flooding the mine.

About 6 in the morning a welcome voice was heard in the shaft. There was no mistaking the bluff tones of Bob Anderson, one of the shaftsmen.

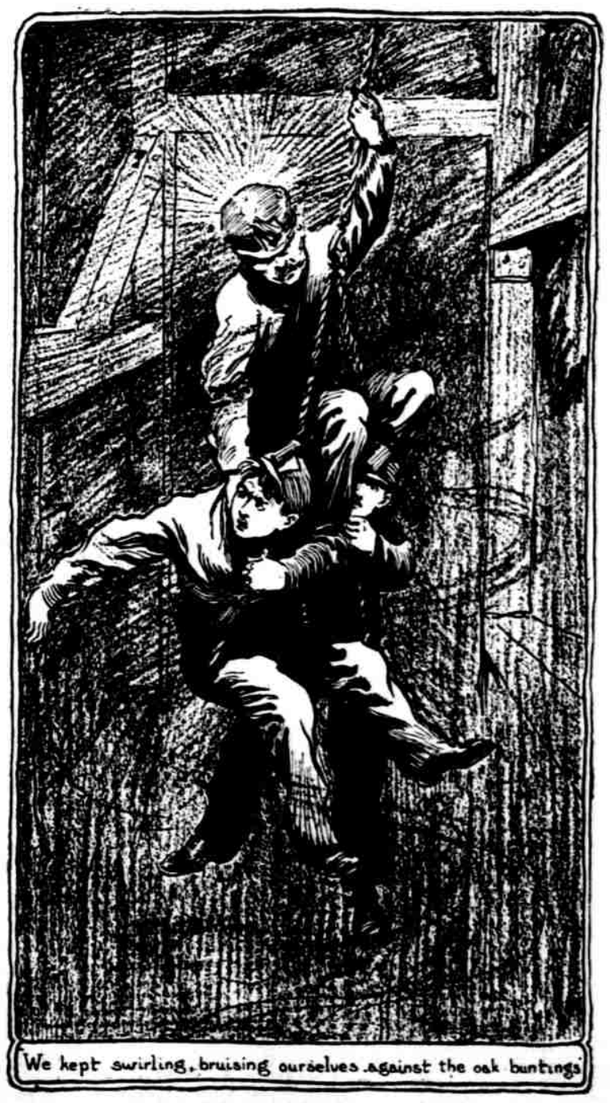
"Are you all right, lads?" was his query.

Not a man was missing, and then Bob explained what had occurred at the top of the pithead.

A fire had broken out in the lamp cabin, and everything above was a mass of burning wreckage. Bob had come down in a "loup"—that is a kind of swing. Luckily, the pulley legs still held, although half burned through.

"The lads first," said Bob, and Tom Andrews and I took a seat in the "loup" below Bob. The signalling wire luckily was intact, and Bob gave the signal for our ascent.

An hour after the last man had been brought to earth the pully legs gave way, and the massive wheels fell crashing into the shaft.



We kept swirling, bruising ourselves against the oak buntings